

Title of Regulation:

Regulation No.:

R 43-279

**MINIMUM STANDARDS OF STUDENT
CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY
ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES TO BE
IMPLEMENTED BY LOCAL SCHOOL
DISTRICTS**

Effective Date:

06/27/14

Constitutional and Statutory Provisions:

Section(s):

59-5-60.

General powers of [State] Board.

59-5-65.

Minimum Standards for student conduct, attendance, and scholastic achievement; enforcement.

59-63-210, *et seq.*

Discipline

Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

State Board Regulation:

43-279. Minimum Standards of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Enforcement Procedures to be Implemented by Local School Districts.

I. Expectations for Student Conduct in South Carolina Public Schools

Students in the public schools of South Carolina enjoy the same basic rights of United States citizenship as do other United States citizens. The rights of students are supported by the responsibility to insure that the rights of others are respected. This regulation is adopted with the intent to better assure that the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of public education is available to all those attending the public schools of the state of South Carolina.

II. Previously Adopted School District Discipline Policies

This regulation is established as a uniform system of minimum disciplinary enforcement for the school districts of South Carolina. School districts, which previously have adopted discipline policies that are consistent with and contain the elements included in this regulation, may retain their local policies as adopted.

III. Levels of Student Misconduct

A. The levels of student misconduct considered in this regulation are arranged by degrees of seriousness. The levels are arranged from the least serious to the most serious.

B. Three levels of student misconduct are identified: disorderly conduct, disruptive conduct, and criminal conduct. The levels are defined in this regulation.

C. This regulation includes a listing of possible sanctions for the three levels of student misconduct. As the levels increase in seriousness, the severity of possible disciplinary sanctions increases.

D. Suggested sanctions within the Level I misconduct category range from verbal reprimand to in-school suspension. Level II misconduct includes sanctions ranging from temporary removal from class

to expulsion, while Level III misconduct includes sanctions ranging from out-of-school suspension to appropriate action within the criminal justice system.

E. A local school board, in its discretion, may authorize more stringent standards than those contained in this regulation.

IV. Minimum Standards

A. Disorderly Conduct-Level I

1. Disorderly conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which tend to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturb the classroom or school. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities.

2. Acts of disorderly conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Classroom tardiness;
- b. Cheating on examinations or classroom assignments;
- c. Lying;
- d. Acting in a manner so as to interfere with the instructional process;
- e. Abusive language between or among students;
- f. Failure to complete assignments or carry out directions;
- g. Use of forged notes or excuses;
- h. Cutting class;
- i. School tardiness;
- j. Truancy;
- k. Other disorderly acts as determined by local school authorities.

3. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in instances of disorderly conduct are:

a. Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the staff member should take immediate action to rectify the misconduct. The staff member should apply an appropriate sanction, and should maintain a record of the misconduct and the sanction.

b. If, either in the opinion of the staff member or according to local school board policy, a certain misconduct is not immediately rectifiable, the problem should be referred to the appropriate administrator for action specified by local school board policy.

c. The administrator should meet with the reporting staff member, and, if necessary, the student and the parent or guardian, and should effect the appropriate disciplinary action.

d. A complete record of the procedures should be maintained.

4. Possible sanctions to be applied in cases of disorderly conduct may include, but are not limited to:

a. Verbal reprimand;

b. Withdrawal of privileges;

c. Demerits;

d. Detention;

e. Corporal punishment;

f. In-school suspension;

g. Other sanctions as approved by local school authorities.

B. Disruptive Conduct-Level II

1. Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which are directed against persons or property, and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of oneself or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings. Disorderly conduct (Level I) may be reclassified as disruptive conduct (Level II) if it occurs three or more times. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities.

2. Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to:

a. Use of an intoxicant;

b. Fighting;

c. Vandalism (minor);

d. Stealing;

e. Threats against others;

f. Trespass;

g. Abusive language to staff;

h. Refusal to obey school personnel or agents (such as volunteer aides or chaperones) whose responsibilities include supervision of students;

i. Possession or use of unauthorized substances, as defined by law or local school board policy;

j. Illegally occupying or blocking in any way school property with the intent to deprive others of its use;

k. Unlawful assembly;

l. Disrupting lawful assembly;

m. Other acts as determined by local school authorities.

3. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in instances of disruptive conduct are:

a. Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the administrator should investigate the circumstances of the misconduct and should confer with staff on the extent of the consequences.

b. The administrator should notify the parent or guardian of the student's misconduct and related proceedings. The administrator should meet with the student and, if necessary, the parent or guardian, confer with them about the student's misconduct, and effect the appropriate disciplinary action.

c. A complete record of the procedures should be maintained.

4. Possible sanctions to be applied in cases of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to:

a. Temporary removal from class;

b. Alternative education program;

c. In-school suspension;

d. Out-of-school suspension;

e. Transfer;

f. Referral to outside agency;

g. Expulsion;

h. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities;

i. Other sanctions as approved by local school authorities.

C. Criminal Conduct-Level III

1. Criminal conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which result in violence to oneself or another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the local school board. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities.

2. Acts of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Assault and battery;
- b. Extortion;
- c. Bomb threat;
- d. Possession, use, or transfer of dangerous weapons;
- e. Sexual offenses;
- f. Vandalism (major);
- g. Theft, possession, or sale of stolen property;
- h. Arson;
- i. Furnishing or selling unauthorized substances, as defined by local school board policy;
- j. Furnishing, selling, or possession of controlled substances (drugs, narcotics, or poisons).

3. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in instances of criminal conduct are:

a. Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the administrator should confer with the staff involved, should effect the appropriate disciplinary action, and, if appropriate, should meet with the student.

b. If warranted, the student should be removed immediately from the school environment. A parent or guardian should be notified as soon as possible.

c. If appropriate, school officials should contact law enforcement authorities.

d. Established due process procedures shall be followed when applicable.

e. A complete record of the procedures should be maintained.

4. Possible sanctions to be applied in cases of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:

a. Out-of-school suspension;

b. Assignment to alternative schools;

c. Expulsion;

d. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities;

e. Other sanctions as approved by local school authorities.

D. Extenuating, Mitigating or Aggravating Circumstances

A local school board may confer upon the appropriate administrator the authority to consider extenuating, mitigating or aggravating circumstances which may exist in a particular case of misconduct. Such circumstances should be considered in determining the most appropriate sanction to be used.

V. Discipline of Students with Disabilities

For additional information regarding Disciplinary Procedures for students with disabilities, see R 43-243.

VI. Other Areas of Student Conduct Which May Be Regulated by Local School Board Policy

A. Other areas of student conduct which are subject to regulation by local school boards include, but are not limited to:

1. School attendance;
2. Use of and access to public school property;
3. Student dress and personal appearance;
4. Use of tobacco in the public schools;
5. Speech and assembly within the public schools;
6. Publications produced and/or distributed in the public schools;
7. The existence, scope and conditions of availability of student privileges, including extracurricular activities and rules governing participation;
8. Other activities not in conflict with existing state statutes or regulations.

B. Other areas of student conduct may be regulated within legal limits by local school boards as they deem appropriate to local conditions. The term "legal limits" signifies the requirements of the federal and state constitutions and governing statutes, standards and regulations, the fundamental common-law requirement that rules of student conduct be reasonable exercises of the school's authority in pursuance of legitimate educational and related functions, and special limitations arising from constitutional guarantees.